



WEST DEAN PARISH COUNCIL

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Tel. Parish Office: 01594 564484 (9.00am – 3.00pm)
Mon-Thur 9.00am – 1.00 pm Fri)
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FULL COUNCIL MINUTES

Meeting Date: Wednesday 30th April 2025

Location: West Dean Centre, High Street, Bream

Present: Cllrs A Bruce (Chair), A Moore, A Grant, M Costley, S Lewis, S Dunford, J Richmond, B Freshwater, S Yeates, S Dunford and R Chance.

Also Present: County Cllr B Hoyland

Clerks: J Miles & P Holland

(These minutes are still in draft form until approved at a subsequent meeting of the Council)

Public Forum:

There were no members of the public in attendance, so no public forum was held.

25040	County & District Reports Cllr Bruce advised Council that Cnty Cllr B Hoyland would be attending but would be late arriving due to a previous commitment. Therefore this item would be moved to another part of the meeting.	
25041	Council Formal Business	<u>Actions Completed</u>
25041.1	Apologies To receive, and consider for approval, any apologies for absence and reasons given. WDPC: • Cllr B Evans – due to medical issues • Cllr S Francis – due to medical issues • Cllr D Wheeler – other commitments • District Cllrs J Dale & B Llewellyn – other commitments • Cllr A Betenson – other commitments These were accepted by Council and noted.	
25041.2	Declarations of Interest/Dispensation Requests Cllr Richmond declared he is Chair of Berry Hill Memorial Institute – who had applied to WDPC for a grant.	

Signed by Chair _____ Date _____

25042.1vi	A new membership subscription for Clerk to SLCC was discussed, this was proposed by Cllr Costley, seconded by Cllr Chance, and agreed by resolution of Council.	Membership application 01.05.25
25042.vii	JM gave a verbal update to Council on the following points:- • The removal of the previous Clerk from the Bank Accounts, • The progress on updating other banking changes which need to be instigated,. • The position of the insurance renewal quote. • The VAT reclaim submitted to HMRC • Receipt of this first part of the precept. Cllr Grant proposed an internal transfer of £100.000.00 to be made from the current account to the savings account, this was seconded by Cllr Richmond and agreed by resolution of Council.	Tranfereed 01.05.25
25042.viii	The Asset Register was reviewed by Council, recent additions were noted. Cllr Grant proposed that the Cllr Laptops be removed from the Register due to reaching the end of their life expectancy and disposed of in a sympathetic manner ensuring no Council information was still accessible on the hard drive, seconded by Cllr Dunford and agreed by resolution of Council.	Items removed from Asset Register 01.05.25
	Cnty Cllr Hoyland arrived at 7.15pm	
	Cllr R Chance arrived at 7.40pm	
25040	<u>County & District Reports</u> Cllr Bruce welcomed Cllr Hoyland to the meeting. Cllr Freshater proposed that the formal meeting be closed to enable Cllr Hoyland to give her County Councillor Report, this was seconded by Cllr Costley and agreed by resolution of Council. Cllr Hoyland gave a verbal run down of the main points in her report and asked for any questions. She stated how much she had enjoyed working as a County Councillor and hoped to resume this if re-elected. Cllr Grant asked a question on the way the choices for Devolution had been made and why there was no option to keep the status quo. The discussion moved to the possibility of writing to Matt Bishop MP to put this point. Cllr Hoyland advised WDPC of the timeframe for County decision and then Government decision. Further discussion was held on this subject which included the GAPTC consultation and it was suggested that Clerk contact GAPTC to see if this was still ongoing. Cllr Moore to draft a letter to Matt Bishop MP indicating that the status quo should be kept for the Forest of Dean. This to be sent to the Clerk for inclusion in May Full Council Meeting	

Signed by Chair _____ Date _____

	The formal meeting was reopened at 7.35pm																											
	Cnty Cllr Hoyald left the meeting at 7.45pm																											
25042.2	Highways & Footpaths Committee The minutes of the Highways and Footpaths Committee 15 th April 2025 were noted and approved by Council.	Orders placed Email sent to A Middlecote 01.05.25																										
25042.2i	Cllr Richmond proposed that the recommendation to Council for the purchase of additional brackets, fixings and light be approved to assist in the movement of the VAS units. This was seconded by Cllr Freshwater and approved by resolution of Council. Cllr Freshwater gave a verbal update on the progress of works at the Game Keepers PH and advised Council that a response was still awaited from A Middlecote of GCH as to the clearing of the sump. He also advised that N Choat had advised that camera works at Yorkley have now been done. Cllr Richaond advised Council that GCH have agreed to place the Village Gates at Ellwood at no charge.																											
25042.3	Finance Minutes The minutes of the Finance Committee held on 10 th April 2025 were noted and approved by Council.																											
25042.3i	Cllr A Grant presented the recommendations Council giving background to some of the decisions, concerns were raised with regard to the Canopy Application, Cllr Grant proposed that all grants, as detailed in the table below, excluding Canopy, be awarded as per the Finance Committee recommendation, this was seconded by Cllr Freshwater and agreed by resolution of Council. <table border="1"><thead><tr><th colspan="2">Summary of Grant Awards recommended by Finance Committee on 10th April 2025</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Berry Hill Orchard</td><td>£250.00</td></tr><tr><td>Forest Fighting Fit</td><td>£550.00</td></tr><tr><td>Forest Read Easy Deal</td><td>£500.00</td></tr><tr><td>Great Western Air Ambulance</td><td>£2,000.00</td></tr><tr><td>Friends of Scarr Band Stand</td><td>£4,000.00</td></tr><tr><td>Yorkley Play Group</td><td>£1,000.00</td></tr><tr><td>The Recreation Ground - Pillowell</td><td>£946.25</td></tr><tr><td>Bream Community Library</td><td>£575.00</td></tr><tr><td>Sling & District Recreation Club</td><td>£1,250.00</td></tr><tr><td>Berry Hill Memorial Institute</td><td>£2,000.00</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td></td><td>£13,071.25</td></tr></tbody></table> After further discussion on the Canopy Application it was proposed that this grant for £2,500.00 be awarded but held by Council until further details of the timeframe for this event and itemised details of spend could be	Summary of Grant Awards recommended by Finance Committee on 10 th April 2025		Berry Hill Orchard	£250.00	Forest Fighting Fit	£550.00	Forest Read Easy Deal	£500.00	Great Western Air Ambulance	£2,000.00	Friends of Scarr Band Stand	£4,000.00	Yorkley Play Group	£1,000.00	The Recreation Ground - Pillowell	£946.25	Bream Community Library	£575.00	Sling & District Recreation Club	£1,250.00	Berry Hill Memorial Institute	£2,000.00				£13,071.25	
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25042.3ii	provided. It was also agreed that the previous grant monies which had not been spent would be request for return as per WDPC Grants Policy. It was also agreed that they would be advised that prior to any subsequent applications WDPC would like to see proof of funding streams obtained. Proposed by Cllr Grant, with a vote of 8 for, 1 against and 1 abstention. The Clerk sought approval from Council to add these payments to the banking system for authorisation the following day, this was also approved by resolution of Council. Cllr Grant presented a recommendation to Council that a further £4,000.00 be awarded to Friends of Scarr Band Stand, should their other funding application be unsuccessful as WDPC Cllrs, including ex-Cllr B Gaylor had been instrumental in the formation of this group. After further discussion it was suggested that a comfort letter be written to The Friends of Scarr Bandstand extending this offer to ensure their projects success, proposed by Cllr Grant, seconded by Cllr Richmond, and agreed by resolution of Council. Council resolved to offer up to a maximum of £4,000.00, which would be taken from Reserves, to The Friends of Scarr Bandstand to get their project to fruition.	Letters sent 02.05.25 Added to bank and paid 01.05.25 Comfort letter to be sent 02.05.25
25042.4	Planning Committee The minutes of the planning committee meetings were received and noted by Council. Cllr Dunford then gave a verbal update on the following topics:- • The number of Self Build application which seem to be coming through, these have a lower barrier for planning and could be viewed as speculative building applications. • An update on the Lion Row Appeal regarding the gates but no date as yet. • The current application for meeting of some of the original Planning Conditions and confirming 'as built' conditions and the revised Biodiversity Plans was delayed again. This is because an objection now received by FODDC from Gloucestershire County Highways. The applicant has again been given a further extension to time. It was noted that this application has been called in by FODDC. At this point Cllr Chance declared an interest on one development mentioned. • The land in Bream for 33 dwellings, Cllr Dunford thanked Cllrs Chance and Lewis for all the hard work and input they gave which has enabled WDPC to submit a revised submission to the Planning Inspectorate.	

Signed by Chair _____ Date _____

25042.4i	Cllr Dunford presented the recommendation to Council for a Freedom of Information Request to FODDC be approved by Council, this was proposed by Cllr Yeates, seconded by Cllr Dunford, and agreed by resolution of Council, although it was noted that the wording could be improved.	SD to look at wording of FOIR and pass to Clerk for submission.
25042.5	Allocation of wheelchair accommodation at Marian Walk, Berry Hill Council discussed the letter from K Chaplin, FODDC Housing Strategy and Enabling Officer, asking WDPC to support the possibility of amending the eligible allocations search area to assist in finding tenants who have the need for wheelchair accommodation. Council agreed a letter of agreement be sent to K Chaplin.	
25042.6 25042.6i	<u>Response to Active Travel Plan</u> Cllr Dunford presented a report from Cllr Freshwater and himself on the recent documents concerning Active Travel Planning issued by GCC and FODDC, containing concerns they would raise such as:- • Parkend FDG being ignored • Costings • No communications with Parishes • Ancient Woodland being ignored Cllr Dunford spoke of the FDG Planning Application and what effect this Active Travel Plan could have on its outcome. He advised that the FODDC Planning Officer had now received a long and detailed objection from The Woodland Trust with regard to Ancient Woodland. After further discussion Council agreed to write to Marcus Perrin, Climate Team Leader (interim) at FODDC stating WDPC have grave concerns over the Active Travel Strategy and the difficulties which arise when working with Ancient Woodland. WDPC are saddened that the WDPC Cycle Track was not included within this plan. Cllr Dunford to send emails of his correspondence to date to the Clerk	
25042.6ii	Discussion on how Council wishes to be involved with the Forest of Dean Active Travel Strategy & Action Plan was held and it was suggested that Cllrs Dunford and Freshwater could participate in the consultation on behalf of WDPC. Cllr Dunford suggested that all Councillors should look at the list attached to this plan to see what is going on in their wards.	
	Council suggested that the West Dean Centre could be offered to accommodate one of the Consultation Events which FODDC would be hosting.	
25043	<u>Items for Information – Councillors to note.</u>	
25043.1	Heritage Report Cllr Yeates gave an in-depth verbal report on the status of the Neighbourhood Plan Heritage Report. He explained why this report is so large and will now bring a finished version to Full Council in May 2025.	

Signed by Chair _____ Date _____

	Cllr Bruce thanked Cllr Yeates for all his hard work on this report. As well as it siting within the Berry Hill NP update Council should consider its wider use as a valuable tool to protect the status of the Statutory Forest and its heritage.			
2503.3	Chairs items Cllr Bruce advised Council that a letter of complaint had been received with regard to anti-social behaviour from youths in the West Dean Centre Play Park. Within this letter the complainant had made an offer to be a key holder and lock the Play Park at 6pm if Council were agreeable. After some discussion it was agreed to allow this in principle should WDPC insurance cover the potential liability. Clerk to check if WDPC insurance would cover this person. With Chairs permission Cllr Richmond spoke of the Basil Whittington Award Scheme (School Award Scheme) and it was agreed that the Clerk contact both Five Acres High School and Hearts of the Forest School with notification of this award and appropriate dates for submissions. With Chairs Permission Cllr Costley spoke of a Facebook post which had been put on Berry Hill Life regarding a Proposal for a Berry Hill split from West Dean Parish Council – this will be brought to May’s Full Council Meeting			
25033.4	Public Round-up – 10 minutes There was no public round-up. The meeting closed at 21.35			
25015	<u>Forthcoming Meeting Schedule:</u>			
May-25				
Tues	6th May 2025	5.00pm	Planning Committee	West Dean Centre
Tues	20th May 2025	11.30 am	Governance & Scrutiny	West Dean Centre
Tues	20th May 2025	5.00pm	Planning Committee	West Dean Centre
Weds	21st May 2025	7.00pm	Annual Parish Assembly	West Dean Centre
Weds	28th May 2025	7.00pm	Annual Parish Meeting	West Dean Centre
Jun-25				
Tues	3 rd June 2025	5.00pm	Planning Committee	West Dean Centre
Tues	17 th June 2025	2.30pm	Highways & Footpaths	West Dean Centre
Tues	17 th June 2025	5.00pm	Planning Committee	West Dean Centre
Weds	25 th June 2025	7.00pm	Full Council	West Dean Centre
Jul-25				
Tues	1st July 2025	5.00pm	Planning Committee	West Dean Centre
Tues	15th July 2025	11.30am	Governance & Scrutiny	West Dean Centre
Tues	15th July 2025	5.00pm	Planning Committee	West Dean Centre
Weds	30th July 2025	7.00pm	Full Council	West Dean Centre
1	The Public Questions & Comments is designed to give electors the opportunity to make representations to the Council or to ask questions. It takes place before the formal meeting of the Council.			

Signed by Chair _____ Date _____

- 2 The time allocated to the whole period of the open forum is 30 minutes.
- 3 Whether your attendance is part of a deputation or as an individual, the spokesperson will be invited to put the case with a maximum time limit of 10 minutes. Follow up speakers will be allowed 5 minutes in total.
- 4 The Chair will decide whether he/she can advise the deputation immediately or if he needs to sound out members and/or consult the Clerk. The Chair will then inform the deputation what action the Parish Council intends to take.
- 5 The initial response by the Council will be to establish if the matter is something which the Council should be involved in as a matter of public interest or is a private matter for the electors to deal with themselves.
- 6 What the Council may not be able to do at this initial stage is to attempt to solve the actual problem itself. What the Council will do is to decide the best method to deal with the problem and this can take several forms as follows –
The Council can decide -
- (i) The degree to which the Council can act as advocate on behalf of the individual or group of electors.
 - (ii) To refer the matter to a Committee of the Council for action.
 - (iii) To place the matter on a future Parish Council agenda.
 - (iv) To instruct the Clerk to make further enquiries or conduct correspondence on behalf of the deputation or arrange meetings as considered necessary.
 - (v) If the matter is already on the Council agenda the Chair will invite electors to make any points they feel are relevant regarding the agenda item. The deputation can then remain and listen to the debate in Council.
 - (vi) If, during the formal meeting, the Chair feels that the deputation has information which will be useful to the Council, the Chair with the agreement of members can invite a spokesperson to address the Council.

Signed by Chair _____ Date _____